ON THE PICKET LINE

By A Woman Writer *in the* Girl Knitter's Strike

NEW YORK.—For thirty-four hours I have been a striker. For thirty-four hours I have struck for higher wages, shorter hours, proper sanitary conditions, the recognition of the United Knitters' union and the abolishment of child labor, writes Marie Coolidge Rask in the New York Sunday World.

As a result I have suffered in mind and body just what any other girl or woman suffers or is liable to suffer who strikes for the same or similar reasons. I have suffered hardships in order to learn truth, just as those who were with me have long suffered for what they declare to be a principle.

Stories of the hardships endured by women strikers at the hands of policemen and others employed by factory owners to oppose them have been many. Hardly a day passes in which some new case is not brought to light in the local police courts. As a rule the sufferer can speak little English. In consequence the recital of her experience is brief. Its full details seldom reach even the newspaper offices. If they do they are overshadowed by the countless larger events which are constantly occurring in a city where the population is so tremendous as in Greater New York.

The only way to lift the veil so that the public might learn whether or not the stories were born of hysteria and vivid imagination was to voluntarily place one's self in a position to experience exactly what these girls have said they experienced.

Therefore I became a striker.

This recital of my experiences is not intended as a defense of the girls nor an attack upon the police. It is designed as a purely impersonal, unbiased, unprejudiced account of what actually happened to me personally and what was seen and done in my presence and hearing.

Arousing the Pickets.

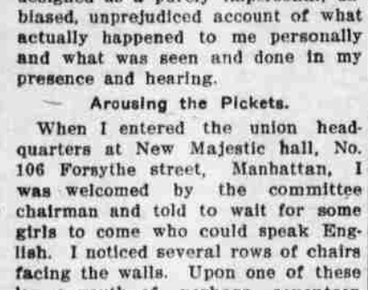
When I entered the union headquarters at New Majestic hall, No. 106 Forsythe street, Manhattan, I was welcomed by the committee chairman and told to wait for some girls to come who could speak English. I noticed several rows of chairs facing the walls. Upon one of these lay a youth of perhaps seventeen years, asleep, with his coat for a pillow. Others in the room had apparently just arisen from similar uncomfortable couches. The chairman was busy giving instructions to several groups of young men and women, all of whom looked tired and sleepy. As I seated myself he went over to the soundly sleeping youth and shook him vigorously.

"Come, wake up; time to go on duty," he remarked.

The curly-haired, brown-eyed stripling sighed heavily, yawned, then promptly went fast asleep again. For a few moments the chairman continued to give directions to the others, then turned to the boy again.

"Here, you," he exclaimed, "don't be lazy. You fellows slept here last night so as to be sure to be on time this morning. Now when I call you you don't want to get up."

The sleepy picket sat up and looked about belligerently. "Gee! but I'm tired," he exclaimed. Then he rose stiffly, stretched himself, ran his hands several times through his



The Girl Strikers Arise at 4 A. M.

curly hair, gave a hitch to his trousers, turned in the neck of his negligee shirt, adjusted his cap carefully before one of the mirrors which lined the sides of the hall and lounged toward the door.

"I'm ready," he announced to the chairman. "Where will I go?"

As he received his orders the girls for whom I had been waiting arrived. They were neat and attractive. They spoke fluently. Considering the brief time they had been in America their vocabulary was surprising. The difficulty was that I could only understand about one word in six. For this reason our conversation was limited. We attended strictly to the business in hand—that of detecting and intercepting, if possible, any strike-breakers who might attempt to enter the closed shops and persuade them to join our ranks.

Beginning the Day's Activity.

When within a block of the shop at Spring and Greene streets, before which we were to act as pickets, members of the union passed us constantly. Here and there one loitered in a doorway or in some obscure corner where it was possible, for the time being, to escape the observation of the police. As we reached the corner a young man stepped hastily up to one of the girls beside me.

"Who's the new girl?" he inquired abruptly, his critical, observant eyes taking in every detail of my appearance. The girl explained rapidly in Yiddish.

A policeman standing directly in front of the factory looked in our direction and the little group fell apart, some walking down Spring street and some along the Greene street side of the building. Back and forth we walked for nearly an hour. The number of pickets seemed to increase. They had evidently been scattered all around the block. As the morning grew late and no workers appeared the several detachments chanced to meet at the best point of observation on Spring street. As we joined the others a tall young man explained for my benefit that they might as well all return to headquarters.

"This shop is running," he remarked. "The bosses must have got the workers here in an automobile before six o'clock. They'll probably let them out about three o'clock this afternoon. I've been here since six o'clock myself. I know every one of their workers. If any had come along since that time I'd have seen them."

Ready for the Meeting.

By twos and threes the little body of pickets turned and slowly made its way back to the hall on Forsythe street. During our absence the chairman and his assistants had been diligent. Fresh sawdust had been sprinkled on the floor. The chairs had been arranged in anticipation of the mass meeting to occur at 10 o'clock. The long counter at the rear of the hall had been brushed off and on it an aged Russian had arranged a tempting array of pears, rolls and pretzels. Five minutes after we entered the hall the scene around that counter resembled a bargain sale in a department store. The pickets were having their breakfast.

By ten o'clock the hall was well filled. There was no unseemly noise or disorder. The sociability resembled that of any large assembly where the majority of those present are young people. Interspersed here and there were a number of patri-

Reporting at 6 A. M.

archal-looking men with kindly faces and sad, discouraged eyes who spoke no English, whose memories of Russia were darkened by tragedy, injustice and oppression and whose bright visions of America had been "shattered by the realization that the highest wages they might expect to receive for the support of their families did not exceed five or six dollars a week." So declared the strike leader, indicating the elderly men by a comprehensive gesture.

Strikers Addressed in Yiddish.

The speeches at the mass meeting were nearly all in Yiddish. The union secretary, Miss Jennie Persley, sat by me and invited me to accompany her to the Brooklyn headquarters at Liederkranz hall on Manhattan avenue near Meserole street that afternoon. I accepted the invitation. Miss Persley could speak English. She could explain everything to me and she would know what particular girls of those present were sufficiently active union workers to warrant their pictures appearing in print. She selected three girls and we five went to lunch together.

In the afternoon at Liederkranz hall the stories I had heard from these girls were supported by the strike leaders. According to their statement, the conditions existing in the knitting mills were impossible. They informed me that they frequently have to work well over fifty hours a week, that in many instances the shops are cleaned only once a week and then it is done by the workers themselves after closing hours on Saturday, that each girl is then expected to clean the machine at which she works and to remove the grease and lint which has accumulated all about it.

The minimum wage, they said, was $4 and the maximum $10 and $11 a week; the usual working hours were from 7:30 a. m. to 12 noon and from 12:30 p. m. to 6:00 p. m., which allowed but half an hour for lunch. In summer the closing hour on Saturday is 1 o'clock and at other seasons 5 p. m.

The demands made were for a working period of 50 hours a week, a 25 per cent increase in wages for all those earning less than $10 a week, a 15 per cent increase for those whose earning capacity is from $10 to $15 a week, and for those earning more than that, a 10 per cent increase, proper sanitary conditions in the shops, the employment of no children under sixteen years of age and the recognition of the union.

Hear Music and Speeches.

At Liederkranz hall about 800 to 1,000 people were assembled. There was music, followed by speeches. Then the crowd poured down the stairway and out into the street. Nearly all turned their steps in the direction of Throop avenue and Kosciusko street, where the Long Island Knitting Mills are located. Some were to act as pickets. Others went to look on. As one looked back toward the hall the procession of young people seemed interminable. The effect was not unlike that of an Easter day parade. The procession extended for blocks. Every one appeared pleasant, every one orderly. The majority of the girls were without hats. Many carried parasols. Light summer dresses and slippers with Colonial buckles were numerous. Jewelry, even of the cheapest and most flashy variety, was conspicuous by its absence.

The promenaders did not go many steps beyond the actual boundaries of the mill property. By twos and threes they passed down Throop

Picket Duty at 7 A. M.

avenue, around the corner and a short distance along Kosciusko street, then turned and retraced their steps for a block along Throop avenue, turned again and repeated the process.

Police Ready to Make Arrests.

The undercurrent of excitement was increasing. The steady marching to and fro was growing monotonous. One of the girls called attention to the fact that the police were preparing to make arrests. She indicated the patrol wagon drawn up on Throop avenue just opposite the entrance to the mills. Every time my companion and I passed or repassed a policeman made some remark designed to accelerate our steps. Once I pointed toward a covered bridge extending back to a building in the rear. The officer was instantly alert.

"Get out of that—move along there," he called.

"I was only looking at that bridge," I replied.

"I don't care what you were looking at," he insisted. "You move along. If I have to speak to you again I'll arrest you."

"But I have not stopped fifteen seconds," I retorted. "Can't I look where I please?"

"No, you can't—not around here," was the reply.

With one accord all quickened their steps, hoping to be within sight and hearing when the strike-breakers should be rushed from the mills to the waiting automobile which had drawn up to the curb and from which a number of rough-looking men had descended.

Someone whispered that the plain clothes men were bringing the workers out of the mill to the automobile. Naturally I wanted to see. The patrolman, according to his duty, was quite determined that I should keep back. Over the heads of those in front of me I could see nothing until after the workers had taken their places in the automobile. I was surprised that no attempt was made by the strikers to molest them. As the automobile started away a low, derisive murmur arose from the throng. But that was the limit of the demonstration made. The strikers had determined to be orderly, and the police had no chance to make arrests.

Glacial Ice Coming.

A Norseman who has been reading the reports of a threatened ice famine in some of the big cities along the Atlantic coast of the United States is preparing to carve up one of the glaciers that are to be found at the river heads of Norway and bring this frozen commodity to the American market. There is no apparent reason why Norway glacial ice should not be sold at a profit in those cities where the retail price of ice has been advanced to a figure far beyond that which prevailed last year.

Off the coast of Newfoundland, less than 1,000 miles to the northward of New York city, are floating icebergs enough to supply the needs of 20,000,000 of people through the hottest of summers. The average man who buys his ice in small blocks has doubtless often wondered why these huge bergs should not be blown up with dynamite and towed down the coast in sections for summer consumption in the large coastal cities of the United States. The Norseman is proposing to do something like this, only he will saw his bergs into small blocks and load them on ships. Thus the transportation will be more rapid and loss from melting less.

Ocean Entry Into New Pork.

Army engineers have reported that the deepening and widening of Ambrose channel leading into New York harbor is finished except for a few minor details, and no further appropriations for construction will be needed. This great artificial channel is seven miles long, 2,000 feet wide and 40 feet deep at mean low tide. At night it is so brilliantly lighted by buoys that the largest ocean steamers can enter with perfect safety. The work was begun in 1901.

VOILE BEST MATERIAL FOR BLOUSE

BLOUSES (that really blouse), like nearly all the belongings of women, are best liked in filmy materials. Cumbersome clothes are in retreat; everything has to be soft and clingy, and nearly everything must be sheer. Some people are much scandalized at this liking for filmy stuffs, but in blouses it must be conceded that such fabrics make up into the most refined apparel that can be imagined.

Voile has proved to be the most durable of thin fabrics. It is used

therefore in place of mull and batiste for waists which must stand much laundering. It is splendidly reliable. Strong laces (Cluny and torchon, or Irish crochet) are used in trimming these voile waists, and hand embroidery is worth while on a fabric which gives such good wear.

At present the prettiest waist show small patterns in embroidery designs. Big, coarse flower designs had a brief vogue, but it never became very general. Now sprays of small flowers, or dots or little figures are done in fine careful embroidery at the front of the waist. Further decoration is added by means of fine tucks and narrow insertions of lace.

A batiste waist is pictured here with very narrow Val lace and sprays of small embroidered daisies furnishing its decoration. The Val lace is not so durable as Cluny or torchon, but if laundered carefully at home will last as long as the batiste. Batiste is the daintiest of fabrics for these wash waists. Nothing else will look quite so fine.

There is nothing more elegant than these hand-embroidered blouses. It is a pleasure to think that any woman who embroiders can provide herself with the finest of them at very little outlay. If bought, one must pay for the handwork, and this brings the price up to an extravagant point—say from five to fifteen dollars. Without doubt the same waist can be made by the capable needlewoman for two or three dollars. Mrs. Millionaire can't have anything better, because there isn't anything more elegant or more dainty than a well-made hand embroidered blouse. If one has time to make numbers of them, batiste is a good choice of material. But for wear and tear, voile in fine, strong quality will stand the strain.

Bath Bags.

Make cheesecloth bag four or five inches square and fill with a mixture as follows: One-fourth pound oatmeal, two ounces finely shaved toilet soap and two ounces of powdered orris root. Drop the bag into the bathtub just before taking your bath. Moisten and rub the body with it, just as with soap. The bag may be used several times if dried after each using.

Kid Gloves Easily Cleaned.

Saturate a handkerchief in gasoline and shake dry; rub this over the soiled gloves, and see if they are not cleaned as easily as when dipped. Kid retains a disagreeable odor when dipped in gasoline, and this process is usually sufficient to do the work properly.

Sashes for the One-Piece Cloth Gowns

THERE are so many different designs in sashes that they have to be classified and named. Those designed to be worn with one-piece cloth gowns are made ready to adjust and are fastened with hooks and eyes. The one-piece cloth gown (with considerable lace and chiffon in the bodice) is crowding the separate blouse and becoming at least equally popular for ordinary wear. But sashes designed for wear with blouse and skirt, and those to be worn with one-piece gowns, differ considerably.

Plaids, Roman stripes and brocades are favored for cloth gowns, although there are plenty of plain sashes finished with touches of plaid or bordered with velvet ribbon. A very popular sash is made of plain satin, shaped at the ends and lined. Hand-embroidered flowers or conventional designs make the handsomest finish for these. Such sashes are made usually without loops. Recent designs show sashes of velvet ribbon with embroidered roses applied to them. These roses are cut out from ribbons or bands manufactured for the purpose, and the roses are sewed to the velvet with an appropriate embroidery stitch or a buttonhole stitch.

Short sashes of brocaded ribbons are liked for cloth gowns. They are wide and there is a liking for a flat bow as a finish, worn at the front. But there is absolutely no rule as to how the sashes and girdles, which are so prominently featured in the season's styles, shall be worn. They wander about the figure in any direction the wearer wills and fasten at any point that it pleases her taste to choose.

The Roman girdle is made of heavy, soft ribbon in brilliant stripes. It is adjusted about the waist, easily extending above the normal waist line and finished with a flat, shirred bow. There is an occasional exception to this method of finishing, however. For slender people a bow of three loops fastening at the left side helps to fill out the figure and enlarge the waist. The loops are graduated in length with one upstanding and two hanging.

Speaking of waists, we must note that the small waist is decidedly out of fashion. It is this fact that has brought about the tremendous vogue of sashes. They do not define the waist line, they conceal it. Their purpose is to belong to the figure above and below the waist and to ignore the waist line so far as defining it is concerned. They show a great advance in popular taste, for this management of the waist is far more beautiful than the hard and fast lines of a few years back.

Plaid ribbons and plain ribbons (or sashes of silk) trimmed with plaid are, more than any other, in keeping with cloth gowns. The plaids of the season are subdued and rich.

By all means prepare to supply your wardrobe with a variety of sashes, for they are the reigning favorite among all accessories of dress. The management of the waist is a new art, a new world to conquer, and it has just dawned upon the feminine mind. What will come of it remains to be seen, but you may be sure that whether you have under consideration a toilette for morning, noon or night the sash is the thing you can't leave out. In fact it is quite likely that milady of fashion will begin by choosing a sash and finish by buying a gown to go with it.

There is nothing haphazard about all this. The sashes designed for wear with cloth-gowns and those designed for gowns of filmy materials differ quite as much as the fabrics they are to go with. Also, the personality of the wearer must be considered, and the style she wishes to affect must be studied. Happily intuition is often a very safe guide. Another consoling thing is that the sash is not an extravagant fad. It is splendidly effective and adds a suggestion of splendor quite beyond its actual cost.

JULIA BOTTOMLEY.

Real Excitement.

"Yes," said the meek-looking man, "I've no doubt you've had some great hunting experiences in your travels abroad."

"I have, indeed."

"Buffalo hunting—"

"Yes."

"And bear hunting—"

"Of course."

"Well, you just come around and let my wife take you house hunting and bargain hunting with her. Then you'll begin to know what real excitement is."

And Very Far.

"Gossips are not reliable persons."

"Yet whatever they say, goes."

Prices of mules are reported to be rising in Missouri.